

# AUTOWEEK VOLUME 26

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# AUTOWEEK®

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## Hunt Wins French GP, Ferraris DNF

By Pete Lyons

LE BEAUSSET, France—How many racing drivers ever get to win two Grands Prix in one weekend?

James Hunt managed that historic trick last weekend in France when on Sunday he won the French GP at Paul Ricard and on Monday he "re-won" the Spanish GP at the FIA headquarters in Paris.

The only thing Niki Lauda got out of his weekend in France was the honor of the fastest lap. That, and a walk back to the pits in the hot Mediterranean sunshine. It was the World Champion's first such walk since Barcelona last year—that makes 17 GPs since his last retirement.

It all started off looking like France was going to be another Ferrari field day. Hunt was on pole, the Marlboro McLaren back on competitive form at last, but at the drop of the tricolor French flag, the Ferrari simply dragged away into the distance. By lap four Niki had five seconds on James, and by lap eight had gained not quite three more. Meanwhile, Clay Regazzoni had charged through from the second row and was pressing Hunt hard, but was a second behind.

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## Holbert's Monza Holds Together, Wins 250-Miler

By Bruce A. Czaja

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla.—The Paul Revere 250, the eighth race in the Camel GT Challenge series, was a significant event. One thing, for those who are into Bicentennial-mania, or who are trivia buffs, the race was the first major professional sporting event of the Nation's third century, what with the start coming at just a tick of the clock past midnight.

However, the race had a greater significance in the overall scope of the series. Al Holbert won the 250 mile race in his Monza. It marked the longest distance an All American GT car, with the exception of Greenwood's Corvette, had run competitively. The races the Monza has won thus far have all been 100 mile sprints. To say the reliability of the car at distances longer than 100 miles was suspect is like saying there are fireworks on the Fourth of July. It's a known fact.

You can't say Holbert won the race convincingly, though. A long pit stop two-thirds of the way through all but knocked him out of contention. Even being the fastest car on the track wouldn't have allowed him to make up the gap. However, a transmission problem on Gregg's BMW, a blown engine on Kemp's Cobra, and the fact that George Dyer's Carrera simply could not run as fast as the Monza when it did run, gave Al the victory and lent credence to the fact that it will be unlikely that any car other than a Monza will win the championship this season.

From the drop of the flag, the record  
Continued On Page 22



The McLaren of Jochen Mass leads Ronnie Peterson's March. They finished 15th and 19th, respectively.  
Chris Mullen

## Comprehensive Service Deal Offered To Mazda Buyers

LOS ANGELES—One of the more comprehensive service offers in automotive history was announced June 29 by Mazda Motors of America, Inc. (MMA, Inc.) president, Ryoji Yumoki.

The offer, called the Free-For-All, provides new rotary owners with totally free service by a Mazda dealer for two years or 25,000 miles, whichever occurs first. The offer includes free parts, labor and materials and went into effect on July 1.

"The Free-For-All is not a warranty," said Mr. Yumoki. "It is an offer by Mazda to encourage car buyers to experience owning and driving a rotary engine car and to relieve the new rotary owner of all service costs."

Free-For-All means just that—all regular service costs normally charged by a Mazda dealer, including parts, labor and materials, are free. For example, the offer includes free engine oil and free tuneups. During the offer, if anything goes wrong under normal use, Mazda will fix or replace it free.

Some examples of covered services are:

muffler, shock absorbers, filters, lubricants, belts and hoses, coolant, fuses, clutch and brakes.

"Unlike our competitors, who charge for servicing, all Mazda asks is that new rotary owners drive normally and have their cars serviced by one of our Mazda dealers, and we'll pay for it," Mr. Yumoki added. "Even the cost of unscheduled servicing is free."

Yumoki said that while, industry-wide many car owners avoid dealer servicing because of costs, Mazda's new offer takes this burden completely off the rotary owner and provides assurance that the rotary car or truck can be properly cared for during the first two years or 25,000 miles of driving.

Basically, the only items excluded from the offer are services required due to accident or abuse. But, the owner does not have to pay for the gasoline.

This offer is available on the complete line of rotary-powered Mazdas—the luxury sport coupe, Cosmo, the RX-4 and RX-3 lines of coupes, sedans and station wagons, and the pickup truck.

## LATE NEWS

● Bad news for Datsun fans: IMSA has retaliated for Don Devendorf's strong showing in the Radial Challenge by raising the minimum weight of his B210 from 1700 to 1800 pounds effective immediately. Since the car now weighs 1725, that means 75 pounds of lead bolted on somewhere.

● Bad news for American car makers: a bill now in Canadian parliament, said to be certain to become law Aug. 1 of this year, will impose weight restrictions on sedans and station wagons. By 1979 sedans can weigh no more than 3500lbs, station wagons no more than 3750. If the bill passes, (most probable, according to sources)

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## Hunt's Spanish Win Reinstated

James Hunt has been reinstated as winner of the Spanish Grand Prix by the FIA.

Hunt had been disqualified after the May 2 race when the organizers discovered the rear track of his McLaren was 5/8-inch too wide under regulations that went into effect with that race. Second place finisher Niki Lauda was awarded the win. Hunt and the McLaren team protested what they called "a punishment like getting the death penalty for a parking ticket" on grounds that the car had been inspected twice before the race without the infraction being brought to their attention and that the excess width was only the result of bulging tires.

Hunt's reinstatement moves Lauda back to second, with Gunnar Nilsson third, Carlos Reutemann fourth, Chris Amon fifth, and Carlos Pace sixth.

With Hunt's win in France July 4, that makes a contest again of the Formula One series: Lauda still leads with 52 points, Hunt and Depailler are tied for second with 26.

## Foyt Takes The Pole, But Cale Takes The Win

By Al Pearce

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla.—Cale Yarborough was talking about the fine line—almost invisible to the untrained observer—between running a race car flat-out for 400 miles and running a race car almost flat-out for 400 miles. Even though it looked about the same to the 70,000 who viewed this year's Firecracker 400 at the Daytona International Speedway, it wasn't that way for winner Yarborough.

"I was getting tired of leading almost  
Continued On Page 18

## McComb TR7 Leads DP Field at Lime Rock

John McComb, driving the Group 44 Triumph TR7, recorded his first win at Lime Rock, Conn. July 5th, beating P.L. Newman in a Triumph TR6.

|    |     |               |           |
|----|-----|---------------|-----------|
| HP | 1st | Bob Criss     | Sprite    |
|    | 2nd | Fred Wentzell | Sprite    |
| GP | 1st | Bob Wente     | Spitfire  |
|    | 2nd | D. Van Syoc   | Spitfire  |
| FP | 1st | John Kelly    | MG Midget |
|    | 2nd | Jim Newcombe  | Spitfire  |
| EP | 1st | Bob Tullius   | MGB       |
|    | 2nd | Wayne Kangas  | MGB       |

Riverside July 4th

In practice Lee Mueller had mechanical damage to his Muffler TR7 which was not repairable. To his rescue came TR6 driver Paul Volmer of Riverside, who offered to lend Lee his car. No stranger to TR6s, Lee promptly went out and won the DP race. Congratulations to Paul Volmer for his sportsmanship. Other results were:

|    |     |                 |          |
|----|-----|-----------------|----------|
| GP | 2nd | Terry Barnard   | Spitfire |
| FP | 2nd | Tom McCarthy    | Spitfire |
|    | 3rd | Jerry Barker    | Spitfire |
| EP | 2nd | Dave Larson     | MGB      |
|    | 3rd | Dwayne Anderson | MGB      |

British Leyland Competition Department

## More On: French GP

Continued From Page 1

Had the idea of a McLaren sandwich sent us out into the kitchen at this point, we would have returned to our screens with a growing sense of bewilderment. There, on the empty, yawning Ricard track, was just one car: the McLaren. Whatever had happened to the Ferrari bread? "I wasn't too worried," said Hunt, describing the way he had lost his pole to

62nd GRAND PRIX OF FRANCE, CIRCUIT PAUL RICARD, LE CASTELLIER, FRANCE, JULY 4, 1976

### ENTRY AND QUALIFYING

1-James Hunt, McLaren M23, 1:47.89; 2-Niki Lauda, Ferrari 312T2/06, 1:48.17; 3-Patrick Depailler, Tyrrell P34/3, 1:48.59; 4-Claudio Regazzoni, Ferrari 312T2/027, 1:48.69; 5-Carlos Pace, Brabham BT45/3, 1:48.75; 6-Ronnie Peterson, March 761/3, 1:49.07; 7-Mario Andretti, Lotus 77, 1:49.19; 8-John Watson, Penske PC4/01, 1:49.22; 9-Jody Scheckter, Tyrrell P34/2, 1:49.63; 10-Carlos Reutemann, Brabham BT45/2, 1:49.79; 11-Vittorio Brambilla, March 761/6, 1:49.79; 12-Gunnar Nilsson, Lotus 77, 1:49.83; 13-Jacques Laffite, Ligier JS5/01, 1:50.06; 14-Jochen Mass, McLaren M23/9, 1:50.10; 15-Jean-Pierre Jarier, Shadow DN5/1A, 1:50.12; 16-Tom Pryce, Shadow DN5/2A, 1:50.27; 17-Hans Stuck, March 761/4, 1:50.31; 18-Illan Jones, Surtees TS19/2, 1:51.11; 19-Jacky Ickx, Williams FW03, 1:51.11; 20-Arturo Merzario, March 761/04, 1:51.79; 21-Emerson Fittipaldi, Copersucar F04/03, 1:52.11; 22-Michel Leclerc, Williams FW02, 1:52.29; 23-Brett Langer, Surtees TS19/03, 1:52.41; 24-Henri Pescarolo, Surtees TS19/01, 1:52.60; 25-Guy Edwards, Hesketh 308D/02, 1:52.63; 26-Patrick Nève, Ensign MN05, 1:52.83; 27-Danien Magre, Brabham BT44C, 1:52.89; 28-Ingo Hoffman, Copersucar F004, 1:53.78; 29-Harald Ertl, Hesketh 308D, 1:53.79; 30-Loris Kessel, Brabham BT44C, 1:55.30.

### RESULTS

1-Hunt, 54 laps on 194.926 miles in 1:40:58.60 for an average speed of 115.824mph; 2-Depailler, 54; 3-Pace, 54; 4-Andretti, 54; 5-Scheckter, 54; 6-Stuck, 54; 7-Pryce, 54; 8-Merzario, 54; 9-Ickx, 53; 10-Reutemann, 53; 11-Jarier, 53; 12-Leclerc, 53; 13-Laffite, 53; 14-Mass, 53; 15-Langer, 53; 16-Edwards, 53; 17-Nève, 53; 18-Peterson, broken fuel injection linkage, 51; DNS: Magre, Hoffman, Ertl, Kessel; DNF: Jones, engine failure, 44; Brambilla, engine failure, 28; Fittipaldi, engine failure, 21; Pescarolo, 19, engine failure; Regazzoni, engine failure, 17; Lauda, engine failure, 8; Nilsson, transmission, 8.

Lauda a hundred yards past the start line. "I made a good start, we both did, but once into second gear his car simply outdragged mine. Nothing one can do about that, it's a Ferrari. Right away I could see him losing something. I saw it in the first corner. I thought it was oil, but



Depailler in the six-wheeler and Watson come up on Guy Edwards during the heat of their battle.

they say it was water, they had overfilled it. Anyway, he had a clean track each time around, whilst it was wet for me!

"I was a bit surprised to see Regga up there, but it didn't bother me very much. You see, we'd taken the opposite gamble on tires to them. We elected to use a set of tires, a good set, that had 50 laps on them; that way we could be pretty confident of our handling staying consistent



Vittorio Brambilla got off to a rousing start, but was unable to finish the race.

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throughout the race. Whereas Niki was on new ones that he had scrubbed in only during the warmup.

"Though he was getting away pretty quickly initially, I knew his tires were going to change and the balance of his car would be altering. I suspect the second half of the race would have been pretty good for me—as good as South Africa and perhaps better! My car was in condition to go hard at the end, it was oversteering just enough to be really good, and if I'd had to race at the end I could have."

But of course he didn't have to. Going onto the long back straight for the ninth time he saw Lauda coasting to a stop up ahead, the flat-12 engine seized up solid. Five laps after that Regazzoni vanished from his mirrors. Slightly different effect for Clay, a hopeless spin backwards into the fences, but the same cause. Ferrari's long run of outstanding reliability had ended.

Of course, the same ill fortune could have struck James Hunt down as well—he had a front tire vibration at one stage, and also was racing with an upset stomach—but it didn't. He drove the last two-thirds of the race at a distinct canter, and won. In fact, the French GP had remarkable reliability—only eight cars out of 26 official starters failed to take the checker.

It is too early, just as it was after Sweden, to cry out in glee or woe

according to your feelings that the Ferrari era in Formula One is over. Niki Lauda, although he lost all points in France and three more the next day from Spain, still has exactly twice as many as his nearest rivals and this is the exact middle point of the season. His car is more likely than not to be reliable next time, and more likely than not to be fast next time...but still you can't get away from the fact that the chain Ferrari has been wrapping around the 1976 season has been broken.

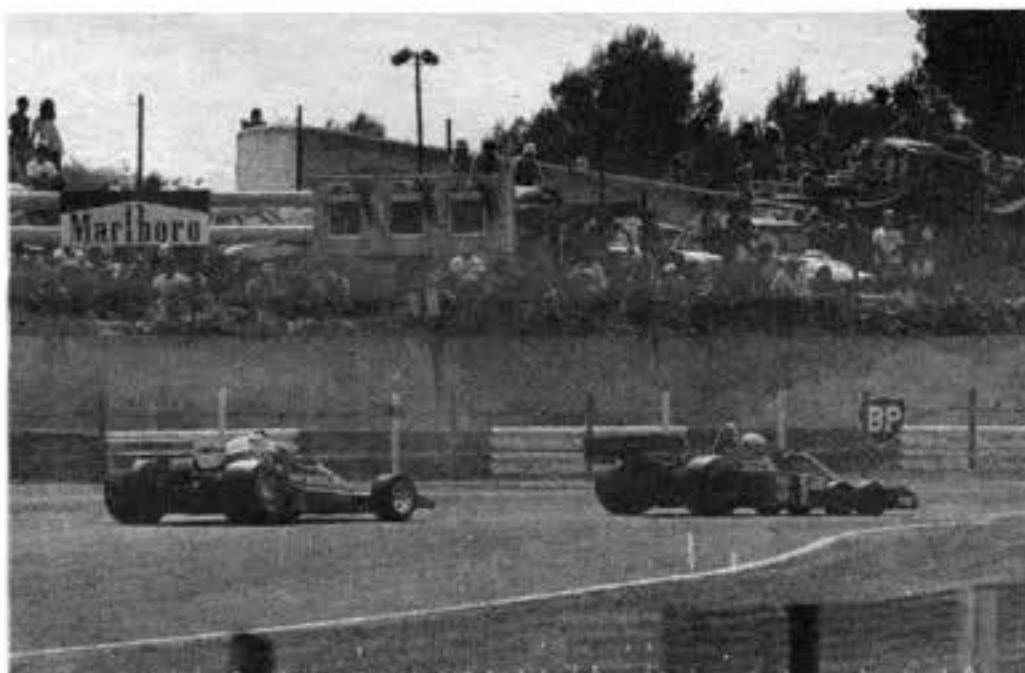
Don't stay away from the screen too much, you might miss something yet.

The French GP had a tendency to break up into strings. Behind the men who joined, however briefly, the front string, came a second group and it was here that one had real racing to watch. Patrick Depailler had lost ground to Regazzoni at the start, but he soon beat off another challenge from Ronnie Peterson and secured for the six-wheel Tyrrell a second place by the end. Peterson had an excellent weekend, he actually was quickest of all in the final practice period, when the track was hot and oily—with a disappointment at the last minute. Three laps from the end, his third place secure, his fuel injection linkage broke. That let a dice between John Watson and Carlos Pace into his vacant spot. That went to the

Continued On Next Page



At the fall of the French flag, Niki Lauda simply disappeared into the distance, his Ferrari's power pulling him far beyond the Ford-powered cars.



One of the better battles of the day was between John Watson in the Penske PC4 and Patrick Depailler in the Tyrrell P34.

## More On: French GP

Continued From Preceding Page

wire 1.5 seconds apart. Earlier on Jody Scheckter, who recovered from a low grid place with one of his spectacular early charges, had been closing up on Depailler, but something went wrong with one of the valves in his engine, and he was struggling to stay in the points by the end.

July 4 in France was of somewhat mixed fortune for the teams with American connections. Mario Andretti, after being quickest during pre-race testing, still was going pretty well in practice despite having his newest Lotus sag in the middle with engine mount failure. He started the older car from the fourth row next to John Watson's Penske, but the start was a little confused. ("I'm still waiting to see the 10-second board," he cracked an hour after the finish. Films of the start in Sweden show without doubt that Scheckter also was moving as well as Andretti on the upstroke of the flag, but Mario still is a little bit sensitive about the subject.) Once under way in France he found his handling was good for the conditions of the day but his car's engine was down on power. "I could have stayed with just about any group I started with,

but I couldn't break out on my own.

It was gradual engine break-up in Scheckter's Elf-Tyrrell that let the JPS driver up to fifth at the end. Fifth that became fourth a few hours later because of John Watson's misfortune in scrutineering. The First National City Bank Penske, after a great long dice with the Tyrrell, Peterson, and the Martini Brabham of Pace, made it home third at the end. The Penske's best-ever GP result is a fine comeback after the crash in Sweden. The PC4 turned out to be a good car after all and Watson was driving beautifully. Hours after the fact, however, came a worse crash. A painstaking inspection of every car showed the Penske's rear wing to be set 15 centimeters too high. As Pace had finished 1.5 seconds behind, the Brabham team immediately anted up the 400 French francs for a protest and Watson was excluded.

Brett Lunger, whose break into F-1 hasn't been going exactly according to plan for a few months, suddenly was his old bouncy, cheery self. "Hey, I like this track. I love these fast corners. Man, they're fun. The car's going good, too." As he said, he "went the long way on the chassis" for a while in practice, and started three rows behind Surtees team leader Alan Jones—and on the same row as private Surtees man Henri Pescarolo. But only the ebullient Brett was around at the finish, having escaped the

mechanical troubles of the others. "This is the first time I've been able to race since Kyalami." His 15th represented real improvement.

Shadow's aging DN5, sliding all over the road with a real lack of grip, was uncompetitive as in Sweden, but at least it was as reliable. Both cars finished.

The French GP starting field was supposed to be 26 but on the first lap

amazed lap scorers counted 27 cars. Next time around, yes, no mistake, Harald Ertl had started too! He lasted four laps before coming into the pits. It made a light break to go up afterwards to Hesketh team manager Bubbles Horsely and remark that you thought Harald had driven a good race. Giggles all around, and then the story.

"Well, none of the other reserves wanted to take the trouble, so Harald was first reserve, and we told him to go out there and join in at the back of the grid, that he either would be allowed to start because someone else had had trouble, or he would be waved off. Standard procedure. Nobody waved him off so he started. Wouldn't you have?"

Sure, probably. So it took the officials four laps to wave him off? "No, I don't believe they actually noticed, anyway they never showed him the black flag."

So he came in of his own accord, eh, that was sensible of him. "Er...no, actually he didn't. Er...would you believe a driveshaft broke?"

## On Keeping A Classic Running

The curved-dash Oldsmobile of 1903 is one of America's classics but the original owner of one of those tiller-steered chariots followed some strange instructions to keep it running.

For example: "Never fill the gasoline reservoir by lamplight." And the owner of a 1902 Cadillac runabout was told how to keep the drive chain in proper condition. "...take about four pounds of beef tallow, about one pound of flake graphite and about one pint of heavy lubricating oil, then heat and stir. When thoroughly melted and mixed, put the cleaned chain in the hot oil."

Owners of a 1915 GMC truck were given this advice: "Grooves are provided alongside the radiator so that pieces of cardboard may be slipped in." That was to help the engine get warm on winter mornings.

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